**Unit Plan – Digital Literature Incorporated Into First-Person Narrative & Memoir/Creative Non-Fiction Writing**

**2 – Week Lesson Plan**

**Class meets Monday, Wednesday, Friday – 1.5 hrs.**

**Unit Goal:**

The goal of this unit it in introduce digital literature into the realm of First-Person Narrative and Memoir/Creative Non-Fiction Writing.

In this day and age, the Internet is as important to the lived life experience as traditional forms of communication, knowledge seeking, and entertainment. The majority of the people living in the modern era are rarely far from being connected to the planet via the World Wide Web (WWW). Ownership of a personal computer, laptop, tablet, etc., is nomenclature for the average person. As mobile phones, and other devices have evolved, access to the World Wide Web is *literally* at your finger-tips.

This goal of this unit is to introduce the concept of digital literature to the students. The class will read scholarly articles and experience digital literary pieces with a heavy slant toward first-person narrative/memoir/creative non-fiction to illustrate examples. The articles will be used as source material to give background and to put this new medium into context. The online source material will provide ‘real-life’ examples of literary works existing in the digital sphere, outside of print media being converted into readable text, i.e., eBooks, eManuals, etc., and how this [digital] form can augment and enhance a piece of literature. It must also be impressed upon the students that while it can enhance the literature and someone’s experience of the work, it can also change the original intent if they are not careful.

As part of the unit student will begin to create a digital representation of one of their own work that they have written, up that point in the class, and present it in two parts to the class. The first presentation will come at the end of the unit. The second, and final, presentation will take place at the end of the course – the students will continue to work, independently, on their digital piece for the remainder of the course and their final versions of the projects will be presented during the last week of class.

With the Internet as such a readily available tool, we as writers (and instructors) should consider it as another vehicle to disseminate our art.

**Required Textbooks for Unit:**

1. Hammond, Adam. *Literature in the Digital Age: An Introduction*. Cambridge UP, 2016.
2. Hayles, N. Katherine. *Electronic Literature: New Horizons for the Literary*. Notre Dame, IN, USA: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008.

**Web-Based Resources (articles):**

1. Strickland, Stephanie. Born Digital. Poetry.org – found online:

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/features/articles/detail/69224>.

1. Charney, Davida. “The Impact of Hypertext on Processes of Reading and Writing,” in Literacy and Computers – found online

<https://www.la.utexas.edu/users/charney/homepage/Articles/Charney_hypertext.pdf>

1. Page, Ruth. “Stories of the Self on and off the Screen”

<http://newhorizons.eliterature.org/essay.php@id=6.html>

1. Kajder, Sara B. “Enter Here: Personal Narrative and Digital Storytelling”

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/4128811?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents>

**Web-Based Resources (digital lit):**

1. Clifford, Allison. “The Sweet Old Etc,” will be provided as an example of what digitized poetry can look like.

<http://collection.eliterature.org/1/works/waber__strings.html>

1. Jackson, Shelly. My Body. ELCv1 – found online

<http://collection.eliterature.org/1/works/jackson__my_body_a_wunderkammer.html>

1. Stefans, Brian. The Dreamlife of Letters.

<http://collection.eliterature.org/1/works/stefans__the_dreamlife_of_letters/dreamlife_index.html>

1. Bigelow, Alan. Brainstrips and one other piece from Webyarns

<http://www.webyarns.com/brainstrips.html>

1. Carpenter, J.R. Absentia

<http://collection.eliterature.org/2/works/carpenter_inabsentia.html>

1. Nathanson, Matt, Headphones – lyrical video

<https://youtu.be/m5nDRg9bcaw>

**Pre-reading materials for introduction to unit:**

Hayles, N. Katherine. *Electronic Literature*. “Chap. 1. Electronic Literature: What Is It?” – pp. 1-42

Funkhouser, Chris. “Digital Poetry: A Look...” Companion to Digital Literary Studies.

**Class 1:**

**Introduction to Digital Literature:**

1. Pose the question to the class: What is Digital/Electronic Literature? If a friend were to ask you what IS digital literature, how would explain it?

* Go around the room and ask each student to give a brief description of what they think digital/electronic literature IS. As we [as the collective class] listen to the impressions/thoughts I will make start a list/make notations about their answers paying close attention to common themes and impressions.
* Depending on the class size, everyone will be required to answer the questions – **MAKE EXPLICIT THAT THERE ARE NO WRONG ANSWERS**. This exercise is more about getting an idea about their understanding of the term and the medium and how/where to start the approach of the subject.

1. After everyone has given their input the common themes/impressions should be addressed. It is often nice to for student to be aware that others share their views.

* Open the discussion about what, about the pre-assigned reading, has contributed to their opinions about what digital/electronic lit is.

1. Provide the instructors definition of digital literature.

* Digital literature is: “work with an important literary aspect that takes advantage of the capabilities and contexts provided by the stand-alone or networked computer.” (Hayles p3).

But I think that further definition and clarification should be made. Digital/electronic literature is also an emerging format of literary, visual, and sonic art with contributions from poets, performance artists, and literary writers the holds no singular "form" but is a conglomeration of forms that now comprised the genre. Digital lit is an evolving process, employing various techniques that began to form well before the advent of the personal computer and continues to refine itself in today's World Wide Web (WWW) environment. (Funkhouser)

* After the definition (perhaps this should be projected on a screen for the students benefit – many students like to have these types of things for reference) pose the question again. What is digital lit?

Acknowledge the ambiguity, but let them know we will take this journey of exploration together.

1. Visual introduction to examples of digital literature.

* Example to be used:
* Waber, Dan, “Strings.”
* Discuss their impressions of the piece. What do they see? What do they find interesting, or not, about the piece? Make sure to keep the exchange on-track as much as possible.
* Continue to ask questions and prompts as the dialect unfolds.

1. Close the discussion for the day and remind students of the readings/assignments due for the next meeting of the class.

* Pre-reading:
* Strickland, Stephanie. *Born Digital. Poetry.or*g – found online:

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/features/articles/detail/69224>.

This piece is assigned because poetry can also be written in the narrative

* Clifford, Allison. “The Sweet Old Etc,” will be provided as an example of what digitized poetry can look like.

<http://collection.eliterature.org/1/works/waber__strings.html>

**Class 2:**

1. Review of previous class

* Reintroduce the idea of digital literature
* Make sure that students have a cursory understanding of what the genre is.
* Inquire about questions, concerns, uncertainties and attempt to provide greater clarification.

1. View Clifford’s “The Sweet Old Etc,” electronic poem in class

* Start a discussion in class about their impression of the piece. What did they find interesting about? What did you like? What didn’t you like? Why? Keep inserting questions and providing prompts to move the discussion along – steer the discussion in a way that will provide a segue into the Strickland piece that was assigned as a pre-read for the days class.

1. Begin discussion about the assigned Strickland article. Ask the students to “be the teachers” and provide an overview of what they have read – interject comments to fill in the blanks as the dialogue progresses.

* Provide some insights into what the article is attempting to convey to the reader.
* Ask questions to make sure that people have, or can come, to some consensus about the intention of the article.

1. View “The Sweet Old Etc.,” for a second time. After the initial dialogue, the students should be able to view the piece through a new lens. They should now be able to provide additional observation about the piece.

* After we watch the piece again, ask the students about their second viewing of the piece. How did the class discussion and change/influence their consumption of the piece?
* Are there additional elements about the piece that notice after contextualizing the work?

1. Introduce terms that can be applied to digital lit presentation.

* Textual/Textuality – comprises of more than just the written word. It is also how words are used, where they are placed in phrases, and how the reader interprets what is being stated.

There is not correct way to describe textuality, there is no language that is exclusively attributed to illustrate representation. “Textuality, as a literary theory, is that which constitutes a text in a particular way. The text is an indecipherable (there is an inexistence of an effective or "strict" method of writing or structure).” (Wikipedia)

* Medium – what form the text is being presented in – print, electronic, oral
* Modality – an avenue of sensation, i.e., via sound, vision, or otherwise
* Interactivity – how much participation does interacting with the piece require
* Agency – what kind of participation on the part of the reader does interacting with the text require

***Make sure that these terms and “definitions” are projected so that they can copied by the students if they are so inclined.***

1. Ask class if they have any questions or need additional clarification of terms, etc.
2. Wrap up the lesson and close the discussion for the day. Remind students about reading due for the following class.

* Pre-reading:
* Jackson, Shelly. My Body. ELCv1 – found online

<http://collection.eliterature.org/1/works/jackson__my_body_a_wunderkammer.html>

* Charney, Davida. “The Impact of Hypertext on Processes of Reading and Writing,” in *Literacy and Computers* – found online

<https://www.la.utexas.edu/users/charney/homepage/Articles/Charney_hypertext.pdf>

* Hammond, Adam. Ch 1 From Literature in the Digital Age – required text for class

**Class 3**

1. Review of previous class

* Review the lesson from the previous day
* Make sure that students have a firm grasp of what the parts of the media that they have encountered thus far in the unit.
* Inquire about questions, concerns, uncertainties and attempt to provide greater clarification.

1. Discuss Charney’s “The Impact of Hypertext on Processes of Reading and Writing.”

* Open a dialogue about their impression of the piece. What did they find interesting about? What did you like? What didn’t you like? Why? Keep inserting questions and providing prompts to move the discussion along.
* Ask students, the willing – and pay attention to those that have not been contributing to the discussion as much as others and attempt to engage (participation is part of their grade) – to share with the class their feeling about the piece and its implications on traditional literature.
* What can be added to the meaning of the text by incorporating this platform?

1. View Jackson’s, *My Body*.

* Jackson’s, *My Body* is a visually and textually complex piece of work. There was a great deal of thought and planning that went into bringing the work into fruition and this should be stated before you the initial viewing so that will allow the students to pay closer attention to the different moving parts.
* Ask the class if they read the intro page of the digital lit before they entered started the piece. Because this is a first-person narrative/memoir writing course this work is a good place to start and to begin to move them towards why you have this unit is part of the class.
* Briefly, to reinforce the piece and as an intro, to remind the class that it is a semiautobiographical piece and for them to play close attention to what she has done/tried to accomplish with the piece.
* Where should we start (body part)? And from there as we [the class] explore the piece, you take their input on the path and read a few sections as you go along. NOTE: This piece is super long and therefore you should be conscious of the time you that you spend because there are additional things that you need to talk about.

1. Discuss what you have just viewed. Ask questions using the terms you introduced during the previous class.

* What was the texture/textuality like in this work? What does it brink to mind?
* Write the terms/descriptions on the white board
* What was the modality of this piece?
* Write description on the board
* Medium?
* Write this on the board so that students can take notes if they see fit.
* Interactivity? – Discuss.
* Does this piece provide agency? If so, why and what kind? – Discuss.

**MAKE SURE THAT YOU DO NOT LET THE DISCUSSION RUN TOO FAR OFF TOPIC.** Ask questions that keep the discussion relevant and, hopefully, piques the interest of the students and fosters a dialect.

1. Start a conversation about the first-person narratives/memoirs/creative non-fictions that they have written in course up until this point.

* Now ask them to take a moment to think about how animating one their pieces would impact how it is experienced. Give them a couple of minutes to think about the inquiry and ask them to jot down their thoughts as they come to them because you are going to ask to them to share those thoughts with their peers.
* Their peers may be familiar with the personal work that they have chosen to address because one the course requirements is to read some of their short writing assignments out-loud during class. Either way, the student will be in structed to give a 30-45 sec recap of the story that they have in mind.
* They will next be asked to provide a short dialogue about how they think digitizing their piece in some way could/would enhance the experience and change the nuances of the piece.

1. Segue into talking about a new assignment that will be due is 2 parts. Explain.

* Explain 1st part of the assignment
* The first part of the assignment the student must conceptualize, strategize, and develop a proposal for a digital representation of you work using PowerPoint.
* The digital piece must include both visual and textual representation of the narrative, etc.
* Set some parameters noting that the students should also think about the terms that we use to dissect how the digital lit that we have seen so far is structured and incorporate that into their project.
* You are required to use personal photographs for your project and may use **5 MAX** open-source photos from the web. These pictures should personalize the writing piece.
* The first iteration of their project will be due 1 week from today the student will give a brief presentation of their work.
* Explain 2nd part of the assignment
* The second part of the assignment the students will continue to work on their digital project throughout the remainder of the semester.
* They will need to keep all the above criteria in mind as they work on their “final” digital project for the remainder of the semester.
* The final projects are due the last week of class.
* Students will present their final project in-front of the class and they will discuss the concept, strategy, and development of the work.
* Students will also take brief questions from their peers in the class.

**A HANDOUT WILL GIVEN WITH ALL THE PERTENENT INFORMAITON ABOUT THE PROJECT.**

1. Wrap up the lesson and close the discussion for the day. Allow time for brief questions about the assignment. Remind students about reading due for the following class. **To tell students to bring their laptops to class.**

\*\*May want to linger a few minutes after class for additional specific questions from students.\*\*

* Pre-reading:
* Stefans, Brian. *The Dreamlife of Letters*.

<http://collection.eliterature.org/1/works/stefans__the_dreamlife_of_letters/dreamlife_index.html>

* Bigelow, Alan. *Brainstrips* and one other piece from Webyarns

<http://www.webyarns.com/brainstrips.html>

* Hammond, Adam. Ch 7 Interactivity from in the Digital Age
* Hammond, Adam. Ch 8 Lit in the Digital Master Medium, from Literature in the Digital Age

**Class 4**

1. Review of previous class

* Review the lesson from the previous day
* Make sure that students have a firm grasp of what the parts of the media that they have encountered thus far in the unit and the assignment given during the previous meeting.
* Inquire about questions, concerns, uncertainties and attempt to provide greater clarification.

1. Discuss Hammond Chapters 7 & 8

* Open a dialogue about their impression of the readings. What did they find interesting about? What did you like? What didn’t you like? Why? Keep inserting questions and providing prompts to move the discussion along.
* Ask students, the willing – and pay attention to those that have not been contributing to the discussion as much as others and attempt to engage (participation is part of their grade) – to share with the class their feeling about the piece and its implications on traditional literature.
* Inquire as to how that has impacted the work that they are doing for their digital projects.

1. View Stefan’s *The Dreamlife of Letters*

* Open a dialogue about their impression of the piece. What did they find interesting about? What did you like? What didn’t you like? Why? Keep inserting questions and providing prompts to move the discussion along.
* Ask students, the willing – and pay attention to those that have not been contributing to the discussion as much as others and attempt to engage (participation is part of their grade) – to share with the class their feeling about the piece and its implications on traditional literature.
* What can be added to the meaning of the text by incorporating this platform?

1. Discuss what you have just viewed. Ask questions using the terms you introduced during the previous class.

* What was the texture/textuality like in this work? What does it brink to mind?
* Write the terms/descriptions on the white board
* What was the modality of this piece?
* Write description on the board
* Medium?
* Write this on the board so that students can take notes if they see fit.
* Interactivity? – Discuss.
* Does this piece provide agency? If so, why and what kind? – Discuss.

1. View Bigelow, Alan. Brainstrips and one other piece from Webyarns

* Open a dialogue about their impression of the piece. What did they find interesting about? What did you like? What didn’t you like? Why? Keep inserting questions and providing prompts to move the discussion along.
* Ask students, the willing – and pay attention to those that have not been contributing to the discussion as much as others and attempt to engage (participation is part of their grade) – to share with the class their feeling about the piece and its implications on traditional literature.
* What can be added to the meaning of the text by incorporating this platform?

1. Discuss what you have just viewed. Ask questions using the terms you introduced during the previous class.

* What was the texture/textuality like in this work? What does it brink to mind?
* Write the terms/descriptions on the white board
* What was the modality of this piece?
* Write description on the board
* Medium?
* Write this on the board so that students can take notes if they see fit.
* Interactivity? – Discuss.
* Does this piece provide agency? If so, why and what kind? – Discuss.

1. Bring the discussion back to the digital projects. Inform the students that they will now have time to work on their projects in-class for 30 minutes.

* This will be useful because it will create a ‘workshop’ or ‘lab’ situation for the students to work on their projects in the presence of the instructor and ask questions.
* I will circulate the room making sure that the students are on task and to get an idea of how the projects are progressing and the directions they are taking.

1. Wrap up the lesson and close the discussion for the day. Allow time for brief questions about the assignment. Remind students about reading due for the following class. **To tell students to bring their laptops to class.**

\*\*May want to linger a few minutes after class for additional specific questions from students.\*\*

* Pre-reading:
* Page, Ruth. “Stories of the Self on and off the Screen”

<http://newhorizons.eliterature.org/essay.php@id=6.html>

* Kajder, Sara B. “Enter Here: Personal Narrative and Digital Storytelling”

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/4128811?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents>

* Carpenter, J.R. *Absentia*

<http://collection.eliterature.org/2/works/carpenter_inabsentia.html>

* Nathanson, Matt, *Headphones* – lyrical video

<https://youtu.be/m5nDRg9bcaw>

**Class 5**

1. Review of previous class

* Review the lesson from the previous day
* Make sure that students have a firm grasp of what the parts of the media that they have encountered thus far in the unit and the assignment given during the previous meeting.
* Inquire about questions, concerns, uncertainties and attempt to provide greater clarification.

1. Discuss Page’s “Stories of the Self on and off the Screen”

* Open a dialogue about their impression of the readings. What did they find interesting about? What did you like? What didn’t you like? Why? Keep inserting questions and providing prompts to move the discussion along.
* Ask students, the willing – and pay attention to those that have not been contributing to the discussion as much as others and attempt to engage (participation is part of their grade) – to share with the class their feeling about the piece and its implications on traditional literature.
* Inquire as to how that has impacted the work that they are doing for their digital projects.

1. Discuss Kajder’s “Enter Here: Personal Narrative and Digital Storytelling”

* Open a dialogue about their impression of the readings. What did they find interesting about? What did you like? What didn’t you like? Why? Keep inserting questions and providing prompts to move the discussion along.
* Ask students, the willing – and pay attention to those that have not been contributing to the discussion as much as others and attempt to engage (participation is part of their grade) – to share with the class their feeling about the piece and its implications on traditional literature.
* Inquire as to how that has impacted the work that they are doing for their digital projects.

1. View Carpenter’s *Absentia*

* Open a dialogue about their impression of the piece. What did they find interesting about? What did you like? What didn’t you like? Why? Keep inserting questions and providing prompts to move the discussion along.
* Ask students, the willing – and pay attention to those that have not been contributing to the discussion as much as others and attempt to engage (participation is part of their grade) – to share with the class their feeling about the piece and its implications on traditional literature.
* What can be added to the meaning of the text by incorporating this platform?

1. Discuss what you have just viewed. Ask questions using the terms you introduced during the previous class.

* What was the texture/textuality like in this work? What does it brink to mind?
* Write the terms/descriptions on the white board
* What was the modality of this piece?
* Write description on the board
* Medium?
* Write this on the board so that students can take notes if they see fit.
* Interactivity? – Discuss.
* Does this piece provide agency? If so, why and what kind? – Discuss.

1. View Nathanson’s *Headphones* – lyrical video

* Open a dialogue about their impression of the piece. What did they find interesting about? What did you like? What didn’t you like? Why? Keep inserting questions and providing prompts to move the discussion along.
* Ask students, the willing – and pay attention to those that have not been contributing to the discussion as much as others and attempt to engage (participation is part of their grade) – to share with the class their feeling about the piece and its implications on traditional literature.
* What can be added to the meaning of the text by incorporating this platform?

1. Discuss what you have just viewed. Ask questions using the terms you introduced during the previous class.

* What was the texture/textuality like in this work? What does it brink to mind?
* Write the terms/descriptions on the white board
* What was the modality of this piece?
* Write description on the board
* Medium?
* Write this on the board so that students can take notes if they see fit.
* Interactivity? – Discuss.
* Does this piece provide agency? If so, why and what kind? – Discuss.

1. Bring the discussion back to the digital projects. Inform the students that they will now have time to work on their projects in-class for 35 minutes.

* This will be useful because it will create a ‘workshop’ or ‘lab’ situation for the students to work on their projects in the presence of the instructor and ask questions.
* I will circulate the room making sure that the students are on task and to get an idea of how the projects are progressing and the directions they are taking.

1. Wrap up the lesson and close the discussion for the day. Allow time for brief questions about the assignment. Remind students about reading due for the following class. Remind the students that their presentations are due for the next meeting. **Instruct students to bring their laptops to class.**

\*\*May want to linger a few minutes after class for additional specific questions from students.\*\*

**NO READING ASSIGNMENTS OR HOMEWORK BECAUSE THEY HAVE PRESENTATION DUE FOR NEXT!!**

**Class 6**

1. Welcome the class for the day.
2. Give brief instructions on how the presentation formats will go.

* Student will select numbers out of bowl and that will be the order in which they present.
* Give a recap of the things that they should address during presentation.
* They will have 8-10 mins for presentations and 2 mins for questions.

1. After presentations, do a recap of the things we have seen and have students upload their ‘first-run’ iterations of their projects on the online course site.
2. Wrap up the lesson and close the discussion for the day. Allow for a weekend without coursework.

**Unit Grading Criteria**

**Content and Development**……………………………………………………..60 points

* Responds to assignment by critically regarding digital literature in execution of project?
* Response clearly exemplifies the unit definition of “First-Person Narrative” and Memoir/Creative Non-Fiction” writing representation within a digital format (in this case PowerPoint.
* Response visually engages the audience using text and personal photographs to illustrate selected writing piece.
* Response establishes the voice of the author and the author’s intent.

**Organization**…………………………………………………………………....25 points

* Student must have a clear structure for the digital assignment and storytelling.
* Student effective integrates a digital photos and text when in approach to the assignment.
* Response to the assignment is creative and engages the reading using texture, modality, interactivity, etc.

**Presentation**……………………………………………………………………15 points

·      Meets length requirement

* Concept is clear
* Demonstrates a clear understanding of unit topic
* Contains few or no errors with mechanic and usage of the medium.
* Work demonstrates basic grasp of digital literature project.